MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT ID NO

MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 3, 2016/2017

LML0015 – MALAYSIAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

(All Sections)

29 MAY 2017
9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT

1. This question paper consists of **SEVEN** pages with **TWO** sections only.
2. Answer **ALL** questions.
3. Write **ALL** your answers in the answer booklet.

SECTION A: SHORT STORIES [30 MARKS]

Instructions: Read the following short stories, and answer the question that follows.

Short Story 1

Flight MH72 by Krish Ram
(Adapted)

Susan has managed to find an empty table after hovering around a couple with large Coke in one hand and a bag of french fries in the other, and waiting for them to leave, at the McDonald's outlet at the departure lounge of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. She looks around her as she nibbles on a piece of deep fried spud, feeling lonely seeing all those others who have come to send off families and friends but, at the same time, she's glad that she's alone. Her children are in school, and know that she'd not be home when they return in the afternoon in the same bus, for they are aware that she's leaving to Hong Kong for a job. "Two years? Why so long? Can we come and visit? Hong Kong has Disneyland, you know?" Mei Ling is only seven. Kar Jin, her boy, who is fast becoming a teenager at nine, had simply shrugged like he knew everything, but didn't. Or, did he? We'll see, darling, she had said, giving her a hug and a peck on her cheek and turning away quickly as she fought back tears, whilst pretending to shout out homework instructions to her son who was already on his way out to the bus-stop.

She had cried miserably after they left, while her husband watched her wordlessly from the living room couch. At least, he had lowered his newspapers. Only her husband knew, and she had had his approval, not that it mattered much. It had not been his idea and had hardly offered an opinion. He had increasingly withdrawn into himself ever since the restructuring exercise in his company. It was a choice between taking a pay-cut and voluntary retirement. He had chosen the latter, and it didn't take him long to understand what the 8% national unemployment figure meant. He had too much pride to take a job that paid less than his earlier one.

That was three years ago, and he has not worked since. Susan thought she should have seen the signs. She had wondered about the increasing numbers of 'Bank Lelong' notices along the roads around Bangsar, written with marker pens on packing-box cardboard, and stuck to lampposts. She had once said to her husband that they should seriously think about using these bank auctions as a means for home upgrading. He had smiled and remained silent. Then, she started noticing the notices in banks, too. She once took a hefty printout, and browsed through it while waiting for her number to be called by the teller. She had been mildly surprised at the number of houses being foreclosed. She had shuddered, and had been glad her family was not part of that statistic. "Poor things," she had thought. "Where will they live?" To be honest, she had never understood when friends talked about 'the economy tanking', although she had shown sufficient concern, nodding and agreeing vigorously when they talked about the bursting property bubble, or the crashing stock market, or unemployment figures, or the plunging ringgit. To someone like her, who'd been a home-maker most of her adult life, these were mere numbers that existed in a parallel universe, like video-game scores. Sometimes it would get heated, particularly when they discussed politics, at which point Susan would quickly go into her kitchen and return with *nonya kueh* she had bought from the auntie outside TMC that morning.

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"Anyone for *kueh bengkang*?"

Then they got a notice from the bank. Her husband had not paid the mortgage instalment for almost two years; nothing, since he lost his job. Maybe there were other notices that she had not seen. She doesn't know why she had opened that letter, because it's not like her to open her husband's mail. She had slit open the envelope and had started reading it absent-mindedly before realising it was addressed to him.They had argued that night. Well, she did. Him, not so much, his stony silence saying everything. Then, she had sobbed for a long time, thinking of all the worst-case scenarios. He said calmly that they should sell the house. She had argued and sobbed some more at that. It was almost paid for, she had cried. "We can't repay the mortgage any more," he had said. "I don't have a job." Well, if you were not so damned stubborn she had wanted to say, but had bit her tongue. He had worked so hard for so long before. They had been living on his savings all this while, he had said. He had not serviced the housing loan because he had not wanted to affect their lifestyles.

"What were you thinking? What happens when we run out of money?" That's what happened, finally. The house was sold at an auction; they got some money back after the bank did the sums, and they rented a seven-hundred-square-foot flat in Taman Desa. She thought she'd get a job; she did have a masters degree in English Literature from the University of Malaya, after all. She tried running tuition classes. She got a few students, but only made enough money only for utility and grocery bills. There were far too many unemployed graduates, and they were all running these classes. Schools were not hiring; not even kindergartens. She was willing to work as a clerk or a secretary, but she got no calls for interviews. She was over qualified for them, they said when she inquired. The unemployment figures were now at 9% and rising. No one had expected it to get so bad so quickly. Meanwhile, they kept eating out of their piggy bank. Once, she thought she was desperate enough to flip burgers at the local MacDonald's, but her pride would not let her. *What if I'm seen*, she had thought. Then, she saw the advertisement by an agency. She applied for the position, a job overseas. She was desperate. She was interviewed, and selected. The pay was good; almost RM3000.00 plus when converted back. But she didn't speak Chinese. The agency told her not to worry about anything; they'd be given training and language lessons before they left. It was also the agency that suggested she changed her name to Susan from Wei Fern. It was easier to say and remember it, they said.

So, here she is in the airport, waiting for her flight to Hong Kong. She had chosen to fly on her own by Malaysia Airlines. *Let me at least save a little of my dignity*, she had decided. The others were travelling in a group on a budget airline, but Susan was afraid someone might see her. We'll meet in Hong Kong, she had said, lying to them about some prior commitment. "Malaysia Airways flight MH72 to Hong Kong is now ready for boarding. All passengers are requested to proceed to Gate C11 immediately," she hears over the PA system. She sees some people grab their bags, and their children; some hugging, some kissing. She decides to wait out the rush.

Finally, on the third announcement, she gathers her bags and heads to the immigration counters to begin her two year contract as a domestic maid in Hong Kong. *The couple have two children and I have a masters in English; maybe I could be their governess,* she'd think sometimes, before real visions of toilet brushes, scrubbing pads and mops crowded her mind, and a sob ran up her throat. Anyway, she has decided tell that to her friends on Facebook and that she'll mainly teach English to little Chinese brats in a palatial home on the island. *I'm sure they have a big home.*

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It was only three years ago that she had had her own live-in Indonesian maid in Bukit Damansara.

Part One (15 marks)
Instructions: Answer the questions below.

1. Based on the excerpt of the short story '***Flight MH72***' by Krish Ram, how does the writer help the reader understand that the protagonist is an urban ethnic Chinese?
   Provide two strong examples. (4 marks)

2. Using the cultural landscape of the story, '***Flight MH72***' what is the status of women working as maids in Malaysia?
   Provide an example from the excerpt, to support your opinion.
   (4 marks)

3. Most Malaysian short stories have Malaysian stereotypes. Describe the Malaysian stereotypes found in the story '***Flight MH72***'.
   Provide 4 stereotypical characteristics. (2 marks)

4. In your own words explain the significance of the title '***Flight MH72***'. Relate the importance of the title to the story. Write your answer in continuous writing between 100 – 150 words.
   (5 marks)

Short Story 2

Shoe bags by Rumaizah Abu Bakar
(Adapted)

Kak Teh and I take off our rubber slippers and put them in two lime green shoe bags with our name tags and tighten the strings to secure it. Our travel agent has provided them to us when we checked into the hotel and advised us to take them to the mosque. It is common for pilgrims to lose footwear left outside. At the entrance, a woman security guard in black looks into our bags. She mumbles something in Arabic as she returns them and gestures for us to proceed. I take my sister's hand as we enter we admire the floral motifs carved on the entrance arch, the walls are of white marble that have light grey strokes in them, the high ceiling is carved in arabesque and the white marble floor we walk on while pilgrims shuffle around us hurriedly. We ignore the shoe racks around the pillars as we have our footwear in our bags. Yesterday, we had trouble finding our shoes at the racks. We have, also, carefully hidden our flat purses in the deep pockets of our robes as a precaution. We go up a flight of steps to another large area and down again to another. The joints in my knees wobble from fatigue and I see that Kak Teh is a little out of breath. We had planned this journey for a long time, depositing a part of our monthly salary into our Tabung Haji accounts. When we learned we had made the Malaysian hajj list for the season, Kak Teh and I were very excited. Tabung Haji also appointed an ustaz from the group as our muhrim as we had no male family member with us. After our husbands passed away, we have both been on our own. The giant cube at the central courtyard looked majestic Al-Haram mosque takes my breath away. The Kaabah is

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fifteen meters high and is draped in black silk with gold- embroidered calligraphy. According to Islamic theology, Al-Baytul Ma'mur was built by angels before the creation of mankind as ordained by God, to be a place of worship on earth to reflect the one in heaven. I feel like the Kaabah is waving at me, welcoming me to the house of God. I wave back and move closer. Thousands of pilgrims are performing the tawaf, going around the Kaabah seven times, keeping their left shoulders parallel to it. It is crowded. Pilgrims walk back to back, with chests touching the backs of those in front, chanting in high spirits, "Allahuakbar! Allahuakbar! Allahuakbar!" We see the Hijir Ismail, separated by four foot high semi-circular wall on the Southwest side of the Kaabah. It is the place where one asks God to grant one's wishes, but we haveto skip it as it is too crowded.

It is a clear and sunny outside, a warm dry day in December but everybody seems oblivious to it. There is much hustle and bustle as people hurry around the mosque, but it is neither chaotic nor noisy. I look around and absorb it all. It feels serene. It is still two hours away from the Zohor prayers, but rows of people are already seated. We find a space on the floor next to three young women. From their crisp white embroidered telekung and baju kurung, we know that they are Malaysians. "Assalammulaikum," We greet them and extended our hands in the customary salam. They smile and rise a little, offering their hands, "Waalaikumsalam." We spread our sejadah to face the Kaabah, the qiblat. Outside Al-Haram mosque, jemaah or group prayers are performed in straight rows with everybody standing behind the imam. However, here people stand in circles around the Kaabah. "Where are you from?" I ask one of the young women. "Kuala Lumpur, and where are you from Auntie?" "Kedah. You can call me Mak Su. This is my sister, Mak Teh." "I'm Iza and these are my cousins, Siti and Ayu." "How long have you been in Makkah?" "Two weeks. How about you?" "We arrived two weeks, as well, but today is the first time we have come by ourselves. Our roommates will be here later for maghrib and isyaq prayers. " "I see."

I open my copy of Quran. Kak Teh takes out her tasbih beads and starts to recite the zikir. Halfway through the first chapter, I look up and see waves of water approaching us. I hear a whistle and a man shouting, "Hajjah! Hajjah!" He gave instructions in Arabic. People already seated rise and hurry towards the steps nearby. The three young women next to us get up, grab their sejadah and bags, hold one another's hands and rush behind the crowd. I struggle with my stuff, help Kak Teh and dash for the steps as well. Though I have witnessed this scene several times, it never seizes to amaze me. The group of men in jade green uniforms march closer with a tanker mounted vehicle. I see the words 'Haram Captor' printed on it. Three men hold up a thick red rope to isolate the area being cleaned. One man pours pails of soapy water onto the floor while two others mop. Then, finally, a machine with bristles at the bottom polishes the white marble to a shine. They are quick and efficient and they do not leave behind a strong smell of detergent when they are done. This troop is responsible for keeping the grand mosque clean twenty four hours a day and seven days a week. They have to work while pilgrims go about with their devotional duties and the grand mosque is never empty. I am amazed at how enthusiastic they are. I have never seen another bunch of janitors so proud of their work. I smile and turn around to say something to Kak Teh. To my horror, I see a stranger stands behind me. My sister is nowhere to be seen. Panic overtakes me. I run around like a headless chicken, yelling, "Kak Teh! Kak Teh! Where are you? Kak Teh!" Heads turn to look at me. I run from one pillar to the next. I go around in circles, as they all look the same. I sweat profusely and my heart beats violently. Where is she? An old woman in black speaks to me in Arabic. Several

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more approach, all talking in Arabic. Their voices are kind but I cannot understand a word they say. Tears flow down my cheeks. Then, I catch sight of three familiar figures in the middle of the mosque where rows of zamzam water containers line the floor; Iza and her cousins. I approach them, panting, and tap Iza's shoulder. She turns around, startled and looks at me.

"Have you … did you see my sister?"

She shakes her head. "Wasn't she with you?"

"No, she was holding my hand when we rushed up the steps. Then, when I turned around, she was gone."

"Oh, dear!"

"I have looked around this area already."

"Mak Su, why don't you wait here? We'll look for her."

Having seen her only briefly, I am worried that they would not recognise her. But they are sure that they would know my sister from the silver embroidery on her white telekung that they had so admired, and her matching bag. Iza talks to the other two women.

"Let's try that floor," she points up the steps. "You can take the left half and I'll take the right. We meet here in twenty minutes." She points to the steps on the other side of the mosque, across the circular courtyard downstairs. "You see the sign there?" The four corners of the Kaabah roughly faced the four cardinal points of the compass; Hajr-al-Aswad, Rukun-al-Iraqi, Rukun-al-Shami and Rukun al-Yamani. They look up, squint and nod. 'We meet at Hajr-al-Aswad."

There is a long queue where she points. Pilgrims are waiting for their turns to touch and kiss the sacred black stone that is set four feet above the ground towards the east of the Kaabah. It is believed to have been white when it fell from heaven and turned black from absorbing the sins of millions of pilgrims. Now cracked and in pieces, it is held together within a silver frame.

"Recite the salawat while we look for her," she says to me. I nod meekly as they spread out. The Tabung Haji officer has told us that the Al-Haram is large enough to house almost four millions worshippers, indoors and out. The mosque was built around the Kaabah during the reign of Caliph Omar Ibn al-Khattab in 634 CE. It was rebuilt twice after natural disasters. To accommodate the increasing number of pilgrims, it has gone through at least four major renovations under several rulers, with more being planned. Currently, it has nine minarets and is one of the world's largest air-conditioned buildings. I spread my sejadah on the floor, sit down and lean against the marble pillar. Kak Teh could not have ventured too far in such a short time. I continue reciting the salawat softly. I recall stories of pilgrims losing their way in the mosque. They say one has to watch one's words in the holy land for Allah's punishment would come swiftly. I wondered if my sister had said something that she should not have without realising it. I should have held on to her hand instead of assuming she would follow me. It feels like a long time before the three women return. They are all out of breath and, to my horror, Kak Teh is not with them.

"Oh my God! What do we do now?" I hope they would have a solution. The area around the Kaabah is crowded. People have laid prayer mats on the floor to reserve their places for the zohor jemaah prayers in one hour. The area upstairs, where we are, is full too. The walkaways are blocked; there is no way we can get out. "It's impossible for us to go anywhere now," Iza says. Tears stream down my face. "Oh, what about my sister?" "Let's sit down and recite the solat hajat; may God help us find her and may she be okay. Afterwards, when the crowd will eases, insha'Allah, we look for her again

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then." I nod, reluctantly. We spread our sejadah on the narrow space on the floor between two Arab women in bright clothes. After completing our prayers, we wait for a while for pilgrims to leave before the group launches another search for Kak Teh. The three women tour the whole of the ground floor before checking the basement and the first floor. After a long while, they return to the big pillar next to the women's entrance where I am.

"Where do you keep your shoe bags, Mak Su?" Iza asks.

"Why?"

"We will see if Mak Teh's bag is still there. We will know then if she is still here. Maybe she met someone she knows and is back in the hotel." I shake my head and show her my green bag. "We carried them with us into the mosque." "Oh! Mak Su, let us take you back to your hotel. I think it is best that we report this to Tabung Haji, and get their help." She tries to smile.

I sit on my bed and leaning against the wall. Six single beds with clean white sheets occupy the room, four in a row, with another two laid perpendicular to them. I am still dressed in my embroidered black robe. My white telekung lies next to me. My four roommates look at me from their beds, awaiting the full account of what happened to my sister. "I lost her at Al-Haram," I start. "We were running from the cleaners. Then, when I turned around, she was gone." "Ya Allah!" They gasp. "We've reported this to the Tabung Haji Officers. They've recorded her name and details in the Missing Person Log Book." Then I start crying. "Be patient, Mak Su." Minah gets up, sits on my bed and hugs me. "The Tabung Haji officer said they would notify the other hotels. Since she has been missing for less than twenty hours, they will not notify the Saudi Arabia authority yet." "Oh dear." "Yes, they say that many missing persons are found within a few hours, or a few days at the most." I sob. After a while, everyone starts talking at the same time, shooting questions at me, curious about the incidence and concerned.

"Do you think she is still at the mosque?" Minah says. I shrug, "I don't know. I only hope she is safe."

I do not follow my roommates to the mosque when they leave two hours later. I am worried of Kak Teh coming back and not finding me here. There is not enough space to pray in the room, so, I spread my sejadah on the landing outside the door, with my tasbih beads at the right corner and with my Quran raised on a tissue box. After completing the mandatory maghrib prayers, I continue with others and conclude by reciting the solat hajat to, specifically, request God's help to find Kak Teh and protect her from harm. I sit on the sejadah, with prayer beads in my hands, pleading to Allah to bring my sister back safely.

When I go downstairs for breakfast with my roommates the next morning, I do not feel hungry. I see a black and white poster on the lift wall with an enlarged passport photo of my sister: It has been five years since I last saw Kak Teh at the Al-Haram Mosque. I have not stopped trying to find her. Tabung Haji Officials and various Ustaz, tell me to pray for her soul, and hope that she is in heaven, Insha'Allah.

I miss her so much.

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Part two: 15 marks
Instructions: Answer the questions below.

1. The setting of the story, ***Shoe Bags*** by Rumaizah Abu Bakar is set elsewhere. Explain how the writer infuses the tale with Malaysianess. Provide two strong examples. (4 marks)

2. Compare **Flight MH72** and **Shoe Bags** from a cultural perspective.
   Part A: List the two most important themes apparent in each story.
   Part B: List two examples of resistant language use in each story.

Part A	Flight MH72	Shoe Bags
Themes	a.	c.
	b.	d.
Part B		
Language	a.	b.

(6 marks)

3. In your own words explain the significance of the title **'Shoe Bags'**. Relate the importance of the title to the story. Write your answer in continuous writing between 100 – 150 words.

(5 marks)

SECTION B: NOVEL [30 MARKS]
Instructions: Answer the question that follows based on the Novel, ***"A Malaysian Journey"*** by Rehman Rashid.

1. Identify and discuss **THREE (3)** political issues that can be derived from the novel as expressed by the writer through his experience. You should support your answers with relevant evidence(s) from the novel.

(30 marks)

Your answer should not be less than 300 words.

End of Paper